

CLAIMS

I Claim:

1. A method for rinsing a splash shield on a mixing machine, the method
5 comprising the steps of:
 providing a vessel containing contents to be mixed, the vessel including an
 opening;
 further providing a mixing machine having a holder for receiving the vessel, a
 rotatable mixing element extendable into the vessel for mixing the contents of the
10 vessel, a splash shield positionable over the opening of the vessel, and a nozzle
 oriented towards the splash shield;
 after mixing the contents of the vessel using the mixing element and with the
 splash shield covering the opening, separating the splash shield and the vessel; and
 directing rinsing fluid onto the splash shield using the nozzle.
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2. The method of claim 1, wherein the directing step is performed automatically
after the separating step.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein the holder is moveable in a first direction
20 towards the splash shield and a second direction away from the splash shield and wherein the
separating step includes the step of moving the holder in the second direction.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein:
 the mixing element is on a shaft;
25 the splash shield is engageable with a member on the shaft, the splash shield
disengageable from the member in response to upward force against the shield, and
 mixing is carried out with the splash shield disengaged from the member;
 the step of moving the holder in the second direction separates the vessel and
 splash shield and causes the splash shield to engage with the member on the shaft;
30 and

the method further includes the step of rotating the shaft to rotate the splash shield during the directing step.

5 5. The method of claim 1, further including the step of rotating the splash shield during the directing step.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the directing step directs warm water.

10 7. The method of claim 1, further including the step of directing rinsing fluid onto the mixing element.

15 8. The method of claim 1, wherein the method includes the steps of:
 with the mixing element in the contents of the vessel, causing relative
 movement of the mixing element and vessel in opposite directions, and
 causing the splash shield to retain the vessel within the holder during relative
 movement of the mixing element and vessel in opposite directions.

20 9. The method of claim 8, wherein in the causing step the mass of the splash shield retains the vessel within the holder.

25 10. On a mixing machine for mixing a liquid contained in a vessel having an opening, the mixing machine of a type including a holder for receiving the vessel and a rotatable mixing element extendable into the vessel for mixing the contents of the vessel, the improvement comprising:

 a splash shield carried by the mixing machine, the splash shield positionable covering the opening of the vessel, and at least one nozzle coupled to a source of rinse fluid and oriented to direct rinse fluid onto the splash shield.

30 11. The improvement of claim 10, wherein the mixing machine is further of the type wherein the mixing element is carried by a shaft, and wherein in the improvement the splash shield is carried by the shaft.

12. The improvement of claim 11, wherein the improvement further includes means for moving the holder in a first direction towards the splash shield to move the vessel into contact with the splash shield and in a second direction away from the splash shield to
5 separate the vessel from the splash shield.

13. The improvement of claim 12, wherein the splash shield is engageable with a member on the shaft and is disengageable from the member in response to upward force by the vessel against the splash shield.

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14. The improvement of claim 13, wherein the shaft is rotatable to rotate the splash shield as rinse fluid is directed onto the splash shield by the nozzle.

15. The improvement of claim 10, wherein the at least one nozzle is oriented to
15 direct rinse fluid onto the mixing element.

16. The improvement of claim 12, wherein the splash shield is of sufficient mass to remain in position covering the opening of the vessel during movement of the holder in the second direction until it engages with the member.

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17. The improvement of claim 10, wherein the splash shield is of sufficient mass to retain the vessel within the holder during relative movement of the mixing element and vessel in opposite directions.

25 18. On a mixing machine for mixing a liquid contained in a vessel having an opening, the mixing machine of a type including a holder for receiving the vessel and a rotatable mixing element extendable into the vessel for mixing the contents of the vessel, the improvement comprising:

30 a splash shield carried by the mixing machine, the splash shield positionable covering the opening of the vessel and having sufficient mass to retain the vessel

within the holder during relative movement of the mixing element and vessel in opposite directions.

19. The improvement of claim 18, wherein the mixing element is carried on a
5 shaft, and wherein the holder is moveable relative to the mixing element to move the vessel in a first direction towards the mixing element and in a second direction away from mixing element.

20. The improvement of claim 19, wherein the splash shield is carried by the
10 shaft, and wherein the splash shield is engageable with a member on the shaft and is disengageable from the member in response to upward force by the vessel against the splash shield.